

R E M A R K S

Claim 11 has been amended to recite that the thermoplastic resin film is perforable by use of a thermal head. This recital is supported by the disclosure of the original specification, e.g. at p. 24, line 19 - p. 25, line 2. Since the present Amendment does not increase either the total number of claims or the number of independent claims, no additional fee is necessary.

Claims 11 (independent; amended) and 12 - 21 (dependent on claim 11), all limited to a method of producing a thermosensitive stencil paper, are in the application. Of these, claims 11 - 15 and 21 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by JP 05-262057 (JP '057), and claims 16 - 20 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over JP '057 in view of GB 2306689 (GB '689).

With reference to the rejection of the claims on the cited art, it may initially be noted that claim 11 as herein amended defines a method of producing a thermosensitive stencil paper comprising a thermoplastic resin film **perforable by use of a thermal head** and a porous resin layer provided thereon, comprising the steps of coating on the thermoplastic resin film a porous resin layer formation coating liquid comprising a water-in-oil emulsion of a resin and drying the coating liquid, thereby providing the porous resin layer on the thermoplastic resin film.

The method of producing a thermosensitive stencil paper of the present invention realizes a stability of porous resin layer formation, a high coating speed, and an improved productivity. In addition, the thermosensitive stencil paper of the method of the present invention exhibits sufficient stiffness and excellent

sensitivity to the making of perforations in the thermoplastic resin film. As a result, a solid image free of non-printed spots can be obtained, and occurrence of the offset problem can be minimized (see the present specification, Table 4 on p. 42, and Table 5 on p. 48).

JP '057 discloses a method of forming an image receiving material for thermal transfer recording comprising a base material such as synthetic paper and an image receiving layer having the porous structure formed using the W/O type emulsion of polyurethane resin (see Abstract and [0009] to [0011]). JP '057, however, does not disclose that the base material is perforated by (or perforable by) use of a thermal head.

Accordingly, for at least the above-stated reason, the present invention distinguishes over JP '057.

The present invention has aimed at obtaining a thermosensitive stencil paper having a sufficient stiffness and excellent sensitivity to the making of perforations in the thermoplastic resin film, etc., as mentioned above.

In contrast to the present invention, JP '057 does not at all disclose a method of producing a thermosensitive stencil paper but discloses a method of forming an image receiving material that is used for thermal transfer recording in OA terminals such as a facsimile, a printer, and a copying machine (see [0029]) and that is designed for being easily released from the transfer recording sheet after recording, without thermal fusion therebetween at the time of transfer recording (see [0002] and [0008]).

The image receiving material of the method described in JP '057 and the thermosensitive stencil paper of the method described in the present invention are in mutually different technical fields so that the image receiving material and the thermosensitive stencil paper differ in problems, requirements and uses.

Accordingly, the method of the present invention results in a product having the properties that are essential for a stencil paper but are not necessarily inherent in the image receiving material of JP '057. Thus, persons of ordinary skill in the art would not have been motivated by the teaching of JP '057 so as to make a stencil paper.

GB '689 discloses forming a porous thermal sensitive stencil sheet comprising a plastic film base on which is applied a porous resin imaging layer. GB '689, however, does not disclose or suggest the method of the present invention including the use of a W/O emulsion of a resin to form the porous resin layer, thereby obtaining the technical effects of the present invention such as a stability of porous resin layer formation, a high coating speed, and an improved productivity.

As a consequence, persons of ordinary skill in the art would not have been motivated by the teaching of JP '057, which differs from the present invention in the technical field, to combine the teaching of GB '689, and even if the teaching of JP '057 is combined with the teaching of GB '689, the present invention cannot be achieved thereby. Thus, the present invention is non-obvious over JP '057 in view of GB '689.

It is therefore submitted that claim 11 as herein amended is not anticipated by JP '057 but distinguishes patentably thereover,

and that claims 12 - 21 are likewise patentably distinguishable over JP '057, whether considered alone or together with GB '689, by virtue of their dependence on claim 11.

For the foregoing reasons, it is believed that this application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable action thereon is accordingly courteously requested.

Respectfully,

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I hereby certify that this paper is being deposited this date with the U.S. Postal Service as first class mail addressed to Commissioner for Patents, P. O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

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